

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, December 16, 1993

Published Since 1877

Eloise Cauthen remembers Christmas challenges, joys

By E. Neel Edwards

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Japanese bombers, Flying Tigers, old-fashioned ice cream, "All Hail Emmanuel..."

These are but a few of the memories of longtime China missionary Eloise Glass Cauthen, who has lived her retirement years in Richmond, Va. She was born in China to missionary parents and then served there many years with her husband, the late Baker James Cauthen, until his selection as president of the Foreign Mission Board.

Christmas was an unusual celebration in China — and certainly not easy. The Japanese had invaded and their planes would make frequent bombing raids over Kweilin, home of the Cauthens and other missionaries. She recalled "always keeping a lunch packed so we could go up into the mountains to seek shelter in the caves."

"But the American Flying Tigers (a group of U.S. pilots) came and... things did get better. Some of them even went to church with us. The children liked them because they had chocolates to share," she said. The Flying Tigers helped turn the tide against the onslaught.

"We had to make all sorts of adjustments for Christmas," Cauthen said fondly. These included ordering modest Christmas toys in the summer from U.S. mail order catalogs, shopping in Chinese markets for cloth to make gifts, repairing toys, making candy and plum pudding, "and, because the ingredients were hard to find, the strangest fruitcake that even included candied Chinese tomatoes," she recounted.

As a child, school was dismissed for two months in the winter in China "and we spent a month getting ready for Christmas. We made ties for the men at the mission station and doll clothes and candy for the children. With cold weather, we would get ice from outside and have the best homemade ice cream with Carnation milk from America and with sugar from abroad. We were so excited!

"Christmas was definitely a Christian celebration. We were in an established (mission) station, and there were many Christians there. Christmas Day started long before daylight when we would hear Chinese Christians singing carols in our yard. We opened the house and the Chinese would come in to see our Christmas tree, which we had decorated with popcorn and red and white paper chains.

"The entire day concentrated on the church with worship and singing. The Chinese loved to sing and act," Cauthen said. "Their favorite carol was 'All Hail Emmanuel.' And they would have already practiced one of Jesus' parables, which they performed on Christmas Day. Their favorite was the Prodigal Son. We had really great Christmases.

"Everyone in the North-China Mission loved Miss Moon and thought highly of her. She did such good work and opened many new areas to the gospel, like Tengchow and Pingtu. She especially loved children, and they adored her," Cauthen said of missionary Lottie Moon, for whom Southern Baptists' yearly Christmas time offering is named.

Cauthen has returned to China only once since being driven out by the communists when they took control in the early 1950s. She taught at Yantai University in 1984-85.

Despite oppression and persecution during harsher communist days of power, Christianity continues to be alive in China today. And Cauthen knows prayer and

the foundation laid by missionaries supported by special offerings — like the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering — helped the Chinese Christians through difficult and foreboding times in China.

Despite advancing years, Cauthen remains active. She still enjoys addressing groups of foreign missionaries who visit the Cauthen Missionary Learning

Center in the Richmond area. And she was a charter member of Gayton Church, which began three years ago as a small mission in Richmond and has grown to a congregation of more than 200 today.

"Isn't God good," she smiled.

Edwards is president of Horizons Educational Programs, Inc., in Richmond and a member of Gayton Church.



A NEW FRIEND — Eloise Cauthen greeted a new — and very young — friend on a street in Yantai, China, while teaching at the University there in the mid-80s. Yantai and Shandong province, where it is located

have a fascinating heritage of mission work. And though missionaries are long gone, Shandong Christians are growing in number. (FMB photo by Joanna Plneeo)

Focus on the Family solvent

Focus on the Family is in no danger of closing its doors, despite concerns raised by a newspaper article that highlighted portions of a ministry fundraising letter. Founder James Dobson called a press conference after an article in the Colorado Springs (Colorado) *Gazette Telegraph*, where Focus on the Family is based, quoted him in the letter as saying, "We would have to close our doors in a matter of weeks without your continued generosity and kindness to us." Dobson reported that the ministry is in "outstanding financial health" and apologized for any misunderstanding. "I see now that the sentence could have been interpreted wrongly," he said. Dobson explained the context of the letter dealt with a company's default on their agreement to purchase the ministry's former headquarters in California. Focus on the Family was able to retain the down payment and put the property back on the market, but the financing of the ministry's just-completed move to a new 47-acre, \$30 million complex in Colorado Springs has left the ministry temporarily cash poor.

AFA backs TV series

Tupelo-based American Family Association (AFA), well-known for campaigns against indecent television, is praising a program for only the second time in the organization's history. AFA president Don Wildmon is praising NBC's new series, "Against the Grain," because it presents positive family values, honesty in school, ethics in business, and the true meaning of good sportsmanship. Wildmon said, "'Against the Grain' is the kind of program we need more of on television. However, the networks have driven away the audience which normally would watch the program. They must allow it time to succeed." Wildmon added that the program is one of the best offered by the networks in recent years, but he is concerned that the network will not give it a "fair shake." "If they do, I think they will have a hit bigger than 'The Waltons,'" he said. AFA continues to campaign against such programs as "NYPD Blue," the ABC prime-time series that introduced full nudity to network television. Mississippi's ABC affiliates have refused to broadcast the program.

Looking Back...

10 years ago

North Winona Church wins an overall first place award in the annual Winona Christmas Parade for their international float depicting flags of the countries in which Southern Baptist missionaries are at work.

20 years ago

Mississippian Peyton Moore, on furlough from his Vietnamese mission field, tells a foreign missions prayer breakfast how he and his family faced death when their house was surrounded by a Viet Cong assassination squad.

50 years ago

Griffith Memorial Church, Jackson, is recognized for leading the Southern Baptist Convention in Baptist Training Union study course awards for 1942. Baptist officials encourage the expansion of Training Union programs in the state.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

The arrows are beyond thee

Jonathan fired the arrows and sent a lad to pick them up, telling him to continue, "for the arrows are beyond thee." It also sent a message to David that things were not going well and there was much turmoil (1 Sam. 20).

It's a terrible realization this Christmas to chronicle the events around us and note that we are yet in turmoil. The strife is evident as battle flags are hoisted. If the "Wingfield 400" did nothing else, they made the average person define his position on school prayer. Lawyers, ministers, lay persons, non-Christians, and atheists are sharpening the instruments of verbal combat. The arrows are still out there.

Crime has increased the fear index considerably. The illegal drug craze keeps the addicts on the move. It takes a good job or thievery to feed a \$100 per day drug habit.

Alcohol consumption will rise sharply this month as sorrows are drowned or "one for the road" could well refer to accidents.

U.S. News & World Report stated that "Mississippi rolled the dice and won." The \$500 million gambling industry was the catalyst for an 11.8% increase in construction. We galloped ahead of all

other states in economic recovery and neighboring states are hungry for a piece of the action. Strange — they always list the winners, never the losers. Gambling opponents have seemed helpless to scuttle the ships of chance. Are the arrows beyond us?

A racial tiredness has settled in, and we may have been polarized rather than drawn together. Two men burn a black church and the white men of one Baptist Association determinedly rebuild it, but chances are the outside world will hear only the first part of the story.

The goodwill of Christmas scarcely makes it over the New Year threshold. Muslims have their first chaplain in the U.S. Army, indicating the growing influence of this Islamic religion with African-Americans. The arrows are out there, but can we find them? The turmoil continues.

So many single parent families; Mississippi continues to rank near the top in illegitimacy. Pilfering the welfare system has been refined to an art and perpetuates a crippling system toward a dark future. Immorality has become the preference in a spoon-fed, TV-addicted society.

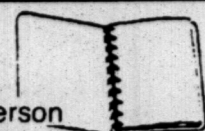
Thomas Jefferson once said, "I hold it that a little rebellion now

and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical." If this be so, we are witnessing a typhoon as government leads out in abortions, homosexuality, and now a cabinet officer favors legalizing drugs.

What is to be done when the arrows are beyond thee? Jonathan said to keep looking. The answers are there, keep searching.

Bob Hamblin of Tupelo in his book, *Studies in Galatians*, comments accurately on Galatians 4:3-4: "When we were children, under the elements of the world, we were enslaved... but when the fullness of time came God sent forth his Son..." Man is a slave to sin because he has not been set free in Christ. God appointed the time. The arrows can be found, the answer is available.

"Winning Mississippi and the world to Jesus" is more than just a slogan. We believe it is do-able. Apparently Jesus thought so, or he would not have issued the command. The power of the Holy Spirit is available, and we have the spiritual resources. This is the one ray of light in a darkened world. It takes a change of heart and attitude, plus a change in direction. True, the arrows are beyond thee, but they can be found.



"HONEY, DID YOU KNOW
OVER HALF THE WORLD
HAS NO IDEA WHY WE
CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS?"

"WHAT TIME IS
THAT 'FROSTY
SNOWMAN' SPECIAL
TONIGHT?"



THE FRAGMENTS

Glad reunion time

The word "reunion" is almost synonymous with happiness. It is a "get together" with a purpose in mind. It is also the name given to a spectacular Christmas presentation slated for the Jackson Coliseum on Dec. 18-19. Presently, there are over 400 people in preparation.

Prayer warriors for the event will include most of the sponsoring church's prayer ministry, plus 144 designated to pray at the coliseum — over every seat and for the person who may be seated there.

This is a creative "reunion" sponsored by the Morrison Heights Church of Clinton. Gary Miller is the music director. Satur-

day afternoon will be a special presentation to the "halt, the maim, the blind," plus the homeless and others. Nearly 100 citizen groups known for helping people will bring in 2,000 people for this special matinee.

The presentation, which consists of the singing Christmas tree, drama, live animals, etc., will also be presented Saturday and Sunday evenings at 7.

Last year, a similar program was seen by several thousand people, with hundreds standing and many turned away. That will not happen this year... there are over 10,000 seats at the coliseum.

— GH

Guest opinion...

Now, about that wall...

By Bill Causey

The wear and tear on the wall of separation between church and state is evident. "Render unto Caesar... and render unto God..." can easily become a confused issue. We've asked Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, to share his thoughts on this vital issue.

Baptists believe in a wall of separation between church and state. They helped to build it... and at quite a price.

But the wall was never intended to separate "religious" from "secular" people and create two societies in the same land merely tolerating each other. The same people were to possess both sides.

So the wall had to have a "door" in it so that easy access from one to the other side would always be possible. After all, "religious" people did not give up their citizenship because they were religious; and people in "secular" callings have not given up their faith to be participants in governing their country. The same

people again!

This means the wall must have windows in it so that each can "see" the strength of maintaining a free church in a free society. They watch themselves so that they don't have a government-run church, or a church-run government.

The wall must be strong because both sides are held up by the contribution each has been making to the other. Society needs "religious" values to provide strong men and women in governments and armies and developing good places to live. And societies need strong governments and armies and communities so "religion" can be free to provide people with those values.

Trouble is... lately somebody keeps moving the wall! The religious territory is about to be pushed off the map, and we move toward a secular society.

Now there are places where religion can't go any more. The door gets smaller and maybe it's jammed, benefitting only the secular side.

What a shame.

We need the wall with windows and doors wide open, and free and unhindered sharing in the marketplace of ideas. That is true freedom! And the best protection for both worlds!

In fact, that's America.

The handmaid of the Lord —

But she did

I did not have an angel announce the coming birth of my child, but she did.

I did not have angels and shepherds worship my child as he lay in a stable, but she did.

I saw no wise men travel far to offer gifts to my child, but she did.

I did not see my child heal the sick, raise the dead, multiply loaves to feed thousands, or turn water into wine, but she did.

I did not see my child brought to trial and sentenced to die on a cross, but she did.

I did not watch my child walk

a lonely road, bowed under the weight of a cross, but she did.

I did not see soldiers shove a crown of thorns into my child's brow, but she did.

I did not watch as men gambled for the garments of my beloved child, but she did.

I did not watch my child suffer as he died on a cross so a lost world could be saved, but she did.

I did not watch as my child, risen from the grave, ascended into heaven to prepare a dwelling place for his beloved children, but she did — and how thankful I am that he did.

On the day I wrote this, a lady sat in my living room and said doctors had just given her weeks to live. One of her greatest concerns was for her son and the fact she would leave him.

As I reflected on her words, I thought of my own child, who had died, and then I thought of Mary, the mother of our Savior and how she must have felt as she stood by and watched her son.

Thank you, Jesus, for what you did.

— Mary Golden, Annapolis, Maryland.

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Baptists lead effort to erase scars left by church burning

By William H. Perkins Jr.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
— Galatians 3:28 (NIV)

Three young men crept down the rutted, single-lane gravel road in the dead of night until they reached their target: Springhill Freewill Baptist Church in Amite County. Using sanctuary hymnbooks for kindling, they burned to the ground the small, African-American church that earlier in the day had commemorated April 4, 1993, as the day Martin Luther King Jr. died.

Watching the flames eat away more and more of the building,

one of the arsonists allegedly said, "Maybe this will teach them a lesson."

It did.

On the brisk Saturday morning of Dec. 11, 1993, Southern Baptists led over 125 interracial volunteers from a multitude of denominations in raising a new building from the ashes of tragedy.

"When we heard the church had been burned, we knew it [the rebuilding] was the right thing to do. About 70% of the people here are Southern Baptist," said Jack Honea, a member of First Church in nearby Magnolia and vice-president of the Mississippi Brother-

hood's Volunteer Construction Fellowship.

The three men responsible for the church fire that night were eventually apprehended and are now serving no-parole prison sentences, but the emotional scars from the burning have taken longer to heal.

Susana Gaten, 90, was baptized into the Springhill fellowship over 80 years ago in a creek just down the road from the church. She pointed to the graves of her parents and grandparents in the cemetery beside the 120-year-old church.

Gaten had found it diffi-

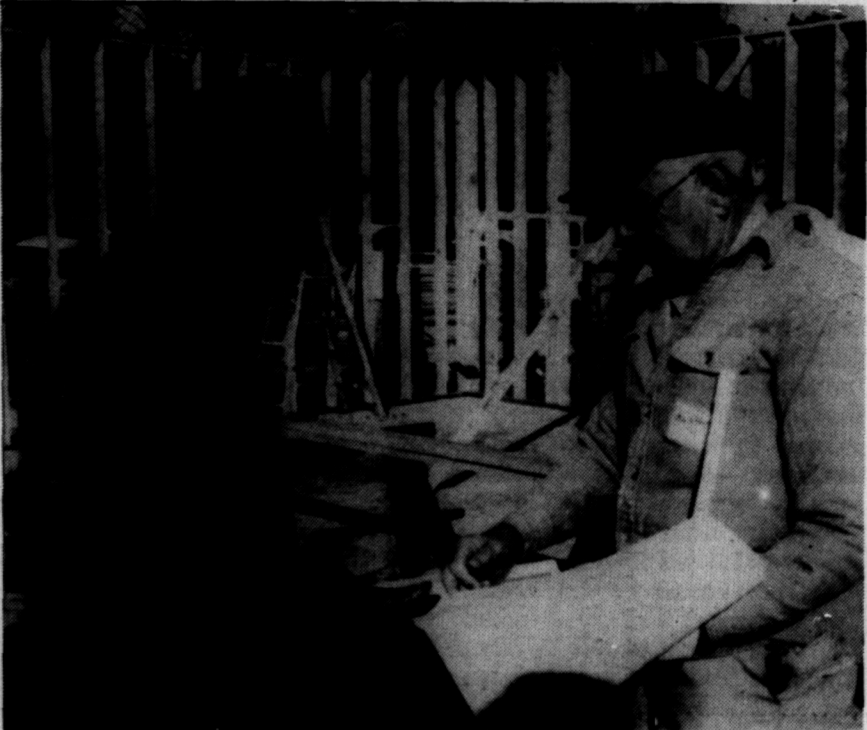
cult to view the charred remains of her church, but she asked her daughter, Hattie Jackson, to take her to the site on Saturday to watch the reconstruction. She marveled at the sense of purpose that pushed people beyond racial and denominational barriers.

"It hurt me so bad when the church burned, because I knew we weren't able to build it back. The Lord sent y'all," she told the volunteers.

The staccato rap of hammers and electric whine of power saws could be heard hundreds of yards in all directions. Carpentry skills (See **SPRINGHILL** on page 9)



Another wall of Springhill Freewill Baptist Church's new building (above) is raised by volunteers as blueprints (below) are double-checked by construction foremen Andrew Felder (left) and Ben Stewart (right), a member of First Church, Magnolia. (Photos by William H. Perkins Jr.)



New officers of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Executive Committee include (from left) Gene Henderson, vice chairman, pastor of First Church, Brandon; Jim Futral, chairman, pastor of Broadmoor Church, Jackson; and Clarence Cooper Jr., secretary, pastor of Emmanuel Church, Grenada. (Photo by Tim Nicholas)

Executive Committee meets, approves Wilson

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Executive Committee approved the promotion of Don Q. Wilson, effective Jan. 1, to direct what was formerly called the Cooperative Missions Department. The new name will be State and Associational Missions Department. This acknowledges the work Wilson will carry with him into the department.

Since 1988, Wilson has been associational administration consultant, operating out of the MBCB Ministry Office. He is liaison between the MBCB and directors of missions. Wilson replaces Ray Grissett who retired this year.

Wilson was previously director of missions for Monroe and Itawamba associations. He was minister of education at First Church, Amory, and was pastor of a number of churches, including Trinity, West Point; Poplar Springs, Vardaman; First, Kings Beach, Calif.; Arbor Grove, Houston, Miss.; and Desert Hills, Las Vegas, Nev. He was assistant director of The Chapel in Yazoo City and in Beatty, Nev.

Wilson is a graduate of Clarke College and Grand Canyon College in Phoenix, Ariz., and earned the master of divinity degree from New Orleans Seminary.

Wilson and his wife Nell have

two children, Scott, a freshman at William Carey College, and Quinn, a senior at Mississippi College.

In other business, the Executive Committee elected officers. Re-elected chairman was Jim Futral, pastor of Broadmoor Church, Jackson. Gene Henderson, pastor of First Church, Brandon, was elected vice chairman, and Clarence Cooper Jr., pastor of Emmanuel Church, Grenada, was elected secretary.

Later, the full convention board approved two percent increases in Gulfshore Assembly prices.



Wilson

Meridian couple named missionaries

RICHMOND, Va. — Dennis R. and Cynthia Jones were among 29 people named missionaries by the Foreign Mission Board Dec. 7 at Bon Air Church in Richmond, Va.

The Joneses will live in southern Africa, where he will start and develop churches and they will be involved in a variety of outreach ministries.

Since 1989 he has been pastor of State Boulevard Church, Meridian.

Born in Millington, Tenn., Jones is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ross J. Jones of Olathe, Kan., and Barbara Lawrence of Millington, Tenn. While growing up he also lived in Atwater, Calif.; Knob Noster, Mo.; Huntingdon, England; Arenrath, West Germany; and Peru, Ind. He considers Memphis, Tenn., his hometown and State Boulevard his home church.

He received the associate of arts degree from Merced (Calif.) Junior College (now Merced College), the bachelor of arts degree from Union University in Jackson, Tenn., and the master of divinity degree from New Orleans Seminary.

He was pastor of Parkview Church, Morehead City, N.C., and First Church, Corning, Ark. He also was minister of evangelism at Central Church, Jonesboro, Ark.

Born and reared in Memphis, Mrs. Jones, the former Cynthia York, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alton E. York of Cordova, Tenn. She considers State Boulevard her home church.

She attended New Orleans Seminary. She was a receptionist in New Orleans and an optometric assistant in Memphis.

The Joneses have three children: Andrea Kristin, born in

1981; Rachel Leigh, 1983; and Morgan Elizabeth, 1985. The family will go to Rockville, Va., in January for a seven-week orientation before leaving for the field.



Dennis and Cynthia Jones



The annual banquet of the Chaplains Association was held during the November Mississippi Baptist Convention. Newly-elected officers are (left to right): Drew Blanton, president; Marilyn Blanton, wives representative; Richard Brogan, consultant, Cooperative Missions Department, MBCB; Gary Bement, military representative; Nolan Brister, secretary-treasurer, editor; Ray Bell, vice president; Billy Jones, state chaplaincy coordinator; and Harold Jordan, business/industry representative.

Call to action issued for casino site near Gulfshore

Spectrum Gaming will very soon ask the State Gaming Commission to approve a casino site less than 400 yards from Gulfshore Baptist Assembly in Pass Christian, in spite of the facts that residents of the area oppose it and the Harrison County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously against it.

This is not a Gulf Coast issue. This could affect the ministry and program of Gulfshore for Baptists across the state. The Christian Action Commission is asking each church in the state to write and call the three commissioners of the State Gaming Commission and tell them of your disapproval of such a plan. Now is the time to communicate. The future of Gulfshore may be at stake.

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Commissioner Bob Engram
P.O. Box 1960
Gulfport, MS 39502
(601) 863-3922

MC trustees scan list of potential presidents

Trustees for Mississippi College (MC) met in closed session Nov. 9 on the Clinton campus to consider a list of 75 people interested in the president's job, vacant since Lewis Nobles resigned in August after allegations that up to \$3 million in donations to the school may have been mishandled by his office.

Leading candidates include Rory Lee, longtime MC administrator now serving as the college's acting president, and Richard Hurt, dean of the Mississippi College School of Law in Jackson. Lee and Hurt are MC graduates.

Trustees have hired an executive search firm to help them whittle the list, which includes recommendations from Baptists across the state and nation. Candidates from Alabama, California, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas are on the list.

Trustees plan to pare the list to a maximum of five candidates by February 1994, with interviews in March 1994 and a final selection later in the Spring.

Current salary for the MC president's job is \$125,000, and fringe benefits include a school-owned residence facing the campus from atop a hill across U.S. Highway 80.

Who's right?

FMB reserve funds spark word war with Fellowship

By Mark Wingfield & Greg Warner

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) — Laypeople's visions of Baptist missionaries stranded on foreign fields have contributed to an ongoing war of words between leaders of the Foreign Mission Board and leaders of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

The central question in the debate is this: At what point will the FMB's loss of contributions from Fellowship sympathizers require scaling back the FMB's overseas force?

The Fellowship is a group of moderate Southern Baptists who have formed their own global missions program.

The moderates claim they have been cut out of meaningful input to the Southern Baptist Convention and FMB by conservatives who now control the denomination.

To complicate matters, the leader of the Fellowship's missions program is Keith Parks, who resigned as FMB president last year in protest of the actions of the FMB's conservative trustees.

FMB supporters claim Parks started the war of words early this year with statements he made on a Fellowship-produced video called "Reaching the Unreached."

On that video, Parks explained that Baptists within the Fellowship movement "cannot in good conscience continue to support missions through the traditional channels."

Yet all "genuine Southern Baptists," he said, are concerned about the future of missionaries already on the field.

Then in November of this year, similar comments by another Fellowship leader at a Mississippi gathering sparked further reaction from FMB supporters.

Harlan Spurgeon, another former FMB administrator who now works with the Fellowship, spoke at a breakfast meeting of the Fellowship's Mississippi chapter during the annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

A question was raised there about the possible impact giving to the Fellowship might have on FMB-supported missionaries.

"My response was 'Look at the SBC Annual, which shows the cash

position and total reserves of the FMB,'" Spurgeon recalled. "I just said that if the income of the Foreign Mission Board was cut by 10 or 20% it would not affect the operation of the Foreign Mission Board. They could go on indefinitely."

During the convention later that day, an FMB trustee from Mississippi made a motion that the state convention increase the percentage of its unified budget that goes to the SBC and, ultimately, the FMB.

The trustee said the action was necessary because the FMB was in a time of great need.

In response, another messenger quoted what Spurgeon had said at the breakfast meeting. The motion failed, but the larger issue of how much money the FMB needs remains.

"Yes, the board does have reserve funds, but they're not nearly enough for an agency like the board with nearly 4,000 missionaries operating on tight budgets all over the world," added FMB Executive Vice President Don Kammerdiener.

In his October report to FMB trustees, the FMB's chief financial officer also addressed the question of money held in reserves.

Carl Johnson told trustees the FMB maintains \$80 million in endowment funds, another \$25 million in contingency reserves, and another \$12 million in operating reserves.

This total balance of \$117 million is in addition to \$106 million in other funds held aside, such as money allocated but not yet spent,

hunger relief funds and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering funds.

"Sometimes folks say: 'I don't understand what the problem is. You folks are sitting on all those investment funds. Why don't you spend some of that capital?'" Johnson said.

"If we were to do that, one effect would be to diminish missionary support. The ultimate would be that we would potentially have to call some missionaries home."

Further, Johnson said, the SBC requires its agencies to maintain a certain level of funds in reserve. And the \$25 million the FMB has in contingency reserves falls far short of the maximum amount allowed by SBC policy, he added.

The Fellowship's drain on the FMB and other SBC agencies is noticeable but not gigantic. The Fellowship received \$7.3 million in 1992 and is expected to surpass \$10 million in 1993.

That is far less than the \$138 million given during the 1991-92 fiscal year through the Cooperative Program, the SBC's primary funding channel, or the \$136.5 million given to the CP in 1992-93.

But, for the first time ever, Cooperative Program giving is dropping. In fact, it has shrunk by an average of 1% a year for the past three years. That affects the FMB, which receives about half of all CP funds.

Wingfield is news director, Kentucky WESTERN RECORDER; Warner is editor, Associated Baptist Press.

Missionary Akins dies of a heart attack in Brazil

BELO HORIZONTE, Brazil (BP) — Southern Baptist missionary Sherry Akins, 47, died of a heart attack Dec. 4 at her home in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Family members believe her death was related to complications from scleroderma, a disease that can cause chronic hardening of the skin and organ systems. Akins was diagnosed with scleroderma in 1992. An autopsy was being performed in Brazil.

Nearly 1,000 people attended a memorial service for Akins Dec. 5 in Belo Horizonte. Several Brazilian Baptists and Southern Baptist missionary David Campbell spoke during the service, describing Akins' "positive testimony and ministry — never complaining, always happy, always desiring to glorify the Lord Jesus," said missionary Elizabeth Gwynn.

Akins' husband, Wade, shared the gospel at the close of the service and invited people to accept Christ as Savior. A young woman

approached him afterward and said she had accepted Christ.

Akins is survived by her husband; three children, Christy, 21, and Timothy, 19, both students at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark., and Jason, 16; her parents; and two sisters.



Akins

No Record on Dec. 23

There will be no Baptist Record issue on Dec. 23, 1993. Postal regulations mandate that we publish only 50 times per year. Therefore, no issues are published during the weeks of July 4 and Dec. 25. Readers may expect their next edition on Dec. 30. Merry Christmas!

Blackaby to broaden work in prayer, spiritual awakening

ATLANTA (BP) — Henry Blackaby, director of the office of prayer and spiritual awakening for the Home Mission Board, will begin a joint assignment with the HMB, Foreign Mission Board, and Baptist Sunday School Board Jan. 1.

At the request of the presidents of the three Southern Baptist agencies, the HMB executive committee voted Dec. 7 to allow Blackaby to broaden the scope of his ministry and develop a global response to prayer and spiritual awakening.

Blackaby is one of the most sought-after speakers and conference leaders in the Southern Baptist

Convention. He co-authored a study course titled "Experiencing God" published in 1990 by the BSSB and follow-up materials released in 1993 called "Fresh Encounter" which have been used around the world.

"We believe God is moving across the United States and around the world and that Henry Blackaby is on the crest of that movement," said Larry Lewis, HMB president. "God is expanding Henry's role beyond the Home Mission Board, and we must not wrest him away from that."

BSSB President Jimmy Draper agreed, saying, "The winds of

revival and spiritual awakening are blowing across the country and around the world. Henry Blackaby has been uniquely used to find where God is working and become involved." He characterized the partnership as "working in league with the Holy Spirit."

FMB President Jerry Rankin said he is excited at the prospect of using Blackaby to "bring people to renewal and spiritual awakening."

"He will be a valuable asset to our missionaries and staff as we seek to remain focused on God and appropriate his power for evangelizing a lost world," Rankin said.

FMB sets appointment record, okays spiritual nurture plan

By Robert O'Brien

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Foreign Mission Board trustees backed a plan to intensify spiritual nurture of missionaries and heard reports of a record year in appointment of mission personnel at their Dec. 6-8 meeting.

They also elected four veteran board administrators to new vice presidencies, honored missions researcher and strategist David Barrett and dug into their own pockets to contribute to missions.

Moved by a report from Kenya about sacrificial giving by missionaries to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, trustees responded to a challenge issued at their October meeting to give sacrificially themselves.

Fifty-five trustees pledged to contribute \$88,500 to the annual offering through their churches, according to trustee chairman John Jackson. The other 35 trustees had not reported pledges as of Dec. 8, he said.

A record annual total of 495 mission workers culminated with the appointment of 32 missionaries at the December meeting. That total — 223 career and associate missionaries and 272 two-year person-

nel — exceeds 1985's record of 429. The 1985 total included 304 career and associate missionaries, still a record in that category, and 125 two-year personnel.

The spiritual nurture of those who serve in missions must not be neglected amidst the worldwide effort to deploy workers and implement strategies, FMB President Jerry Rankin told trustees in his report.

Rankin said the Foreign Mission Board will ask Henry Blackaby of Atlanta to help intensify its focus on prayer and spiritual renewal in a joint effort with two other Southern Baptist agencies — the Home Mission Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board. Blackaby currently directs the Home Mission Board's office of prayer and spiritual awakening.

In the same meeting, trustees named a father and son to different posts. They elected Bill Bullington as vice president for overseas services and appointed his son and daughter-in-law as career missionaries.

Kirk Bullington, a music missionary who grew up with his parents in West Africa, and his wife

Karen, a physician from Arkadelphia, Ark., will serve in the Dominican Republic.

Bill Bullington, former vice president for Africa, and a missionary and administrator for 27 years, will oversee missions research, evangelism and church growth, human needs, overseas media services, the board's Jenkins Research Library, missionary health and family services, and missionary information analysis.

The board also elected three others with more than 30 years' service each.

Sam James, former vice president for Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa, was elected vice president for creative leadership development. He will lead in developing church growth strategies overseas, evaluating FMB training programs for overseas personnel, and evaluating board involvement in leadership training of Christians overseas.

Bill Wakefield, former vice president for Asia and the Pacific, was named vice president for international outreach. In cooperation with others already involved in international ministries, he will develop strategies to relate and minister to international people moving to and from the United States.

Lewis Myers, former vice president for Cooperative Services International, will become vice president for World A strategies. He will develop strategies to keep board staff, missionaries, and Southern Baptists focused on the challenge to reach World A.

In other action, trustees accepted an invitation from the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference to hold a missionary appointment service during its meeting in Orlando, Fla., next June in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention. The trustees voted to meet in Orlando June 10-12 and conduct the appointment service during the June 12 evening session of the Pastors' Conference.

O'Brien writes for FMB.

Thursday, December 16, 1993

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5



Men making a difference

MEMPHIS — William Causey (left), executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, is welcomed to the first-ever gathering of state convention executives at the Brotherhood Commission by James D. Williams, president of the agency. Brotherhood staff members provided the executives with a comprehensive overview of the agency's programs and missions involvement that included the debut of its "Men Making a Difference" concept for men's ministries. (Brotherhood Commission photo by David Nester)

Flood victims return home for the holidays

By Teresa Dickens

The holiday season will be a little more comfortable for a Missouri pastor's family thanks to the help of churches in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas.

Wendall Turner, pastor of Brunswick Church, Brunswick, Mo., and his family were forced out of their home July 11 by flood waters from the Missouri River. Their home eventually contained 14 inches of water. In addition to the parsonage, the church's basement was submerged in four feet of water.

When Baptists from the aforementioned states learned of the small Missouri church's plight, they sent in aid. Some of the aid included volunteers who helped with clean up and reconstruction. Other aid was monetary. Four churches in Benton-Tippah Association — Palmer, Mt. Moriah, Providence, and Tiplersville —

raised \$2,556 for them to use in repairing the basement and parsonage.

Thanks to these Baptists generosity and helping hands, Turner and his family moved back into their home Nov. 8, and the church's basement is close to being ready to paint.

Turner's wife Mary Jo expressed thanks to her fellow Baptists for their help, adding, "It's good to be home."

No doubt many individuals and church families in the flood-ravaged Midwest can echo Turner's comments this holiday season due to the compassion of Mississippi Baptists. Dozens of teams went to help in clean up and rebuilding, and churches and individuals gave \$75,000 for flood victim assistance.

So, on their behalf, "Thanks Mississippi Baptists... It's good to be home."

Moroccan man jailed for becoming a Christian

CASABLANCA, Morocco (BP) — A Moroccan man has been sentenced to three years in prison for converting from Islam to Christianity.

The French-language newspaper l'Opinion identified him as Mustapha Zemamda of Casablanca. He was sentenced in the district court of Casablanca in November.

Nineteen Moroccans who signed up for a correspondence course in Christianity mailed from France were summoned by the court Oct. 25. Officials ordered them to sign a statement agreeing to sever relations with the correspondence school.

Eighteen signed, but Zemamda

refused. Summoned to court again four days later, he still refused to sign or renounce his Christian faith. Sentencing followed. Officials took no action against a Brazilian named in the news article as Zemamda's religious mentor in Morocco because he is a "Christian," or foreigner.

Christians in Morocco requested prayer for Zemamda and all Christian believers in the country. Morocco is almost 100% Muslim and is considered one of the countries most closed to the gospel.

Concerns addressed to the Moroccan embassy in Washington, D.C., should note Zemamda's case number, 8075/93.

Mystery continues over lost Baptist Building mail

Jackson's U.S. Postmaster has been called in to help with the search for mail that apparently went undelivered to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) some time around Nov. 8, according to MBCB director of accounting Barri Shirley.

Shirley said quantity and time frame for the missing correspondence have not been determined, but he is concerned that some church contributions to the Cooperative Program and subscription payments to The Baptist Record are in the marooned mail.

"All churches should carefully examine their November receipts for accuracy. Please inform the MBCB business office of any discrepancies," he said.

Guy Henderson, editor of The Baptist Record, pointed out that news items destined for the newspaper may also be lost.

"We are extremely sorry for any inconvenience this has caused. We are checking with the postal service and hope to have it cleared up soon," he said.

Inaccessible to outside, Nagas welcome Baptists

NAGALAND, India (BP) — Almost 156 years ago, the gospel of Jesus Christ changed the Nagas of India from being headhunters.

Inaccessible to the outside world, in the rugged hills of north-east India, there are more than two million Nagas, 60% of whom are Baptists.

They struggle with poverty and political turmoil, but are aggressively sending out missionaries to their own and other people to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Political insurgency and tribal infighting have almost sealed off the territory of these Tibet-Burmese tribals on the Myanmar border to visitors, especially to Christian leaders and former missionaries who were forced to leave in 1956.

Discovered by the British in the 1830's and finally conquered by them in 1879, the Naga people were divided with more than half in Myanmar.

When India became independent from Britain in 1947, Nagaland remained part of India. Since that time, there has been a guerilla movement against the Indian government.

But, through a miracle of God's grace, and as part of the 200th anniversary celebrations of British missionary William Carey, a 13-member delegation from the Baptist World Alliance visited Nagaland, also known as "Baptist country," Nov. 2-9.

It was not until the day before they were scheduled to leave that the team learned they had been permitted by the Indian government to visit this restricted area.

In 1986, several Baptist leaders

visited Dimapur to celebrate the coming of the gospel to these former headhunters 150 years ago, but it had been 20 and even 30 years since a delegation of Baptists had been allowed in places like Mokokchung, Kohima, and Imphur where the political insurgency is at the highest level.

Led by Tony Cupit, BWA evangelism and education director, the delegation visited churches, schools, hospitals, theological colleges, and agricultural schools, all the result of Christian mission work, especially that of the American Baptist Churches USA.

"The history of all tribals in the north begins with the church," said one Naga leader.

Even among the young people, there is much thankfulness to Western missionaries who brought the gospel that transformed Nagas from headhunters to Christians and brought education to their people.

The grandeur of the green Naga mountains, the treacherous bumpy roads, the tense political atmosphere, but above all, the glorious welcomes in song, speech, and tribal dance at more than 18 stops made for an historic and unforgettable visit for the BWA team.

The sight of a Baptist church, with cross lifted high on almost every hill in every village, demonstrated the impact of the gospel and the importance of the church among the Nagas.

Tsolie Chase, acting general secretary of the Nagaland Baptist Church council, was one of many leaders who welcomed the BWA when the team stopped at Kohima.

Last August the BWA wel-

comed the NBCC, composed of 19 Naga tribal associations with 1,272 churches and 270,000 members, into its membership.

"Baptists of the world honor, love, and pray for Baptists in Nagaland," said Cupit. "We know of your faith, love for God, and evangelism."

"Our lives will never be the same again because God has touched us through you," said Harry Monro, evangelism director for the Baptist Union of Australia.

The team worshipped in many churches. They found them filled to capacity, with more than 70 or 80% of the people under 25.

"In the last two years we have seen miracle growth, especially through the ministry of radio," said L.J. Sangma, executive secretary of the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India.

People correspond to the radio ministries and are then invited to church. He said many Muslims and high caste Brahmins are coming to know Jesus Christ.

"We are proud of our bamboo walls, bamboo thatched roof, mud floors, and jungle decorations," said Wati Aier, principal of the Oriental Theological College. "We are doing something special for the king of kings. We are servants in his vineyard."

Aier described the 20 first-year students from several Naga tribes as "talented, committed people," a fact evident from their stirring testimonies during a chapel service.

"You are a choice people," BWA President Knud Wumpelmann told the students.

"God is with you always," Cupit told them, citing the promise of Jesus that "the Holy Spirit is

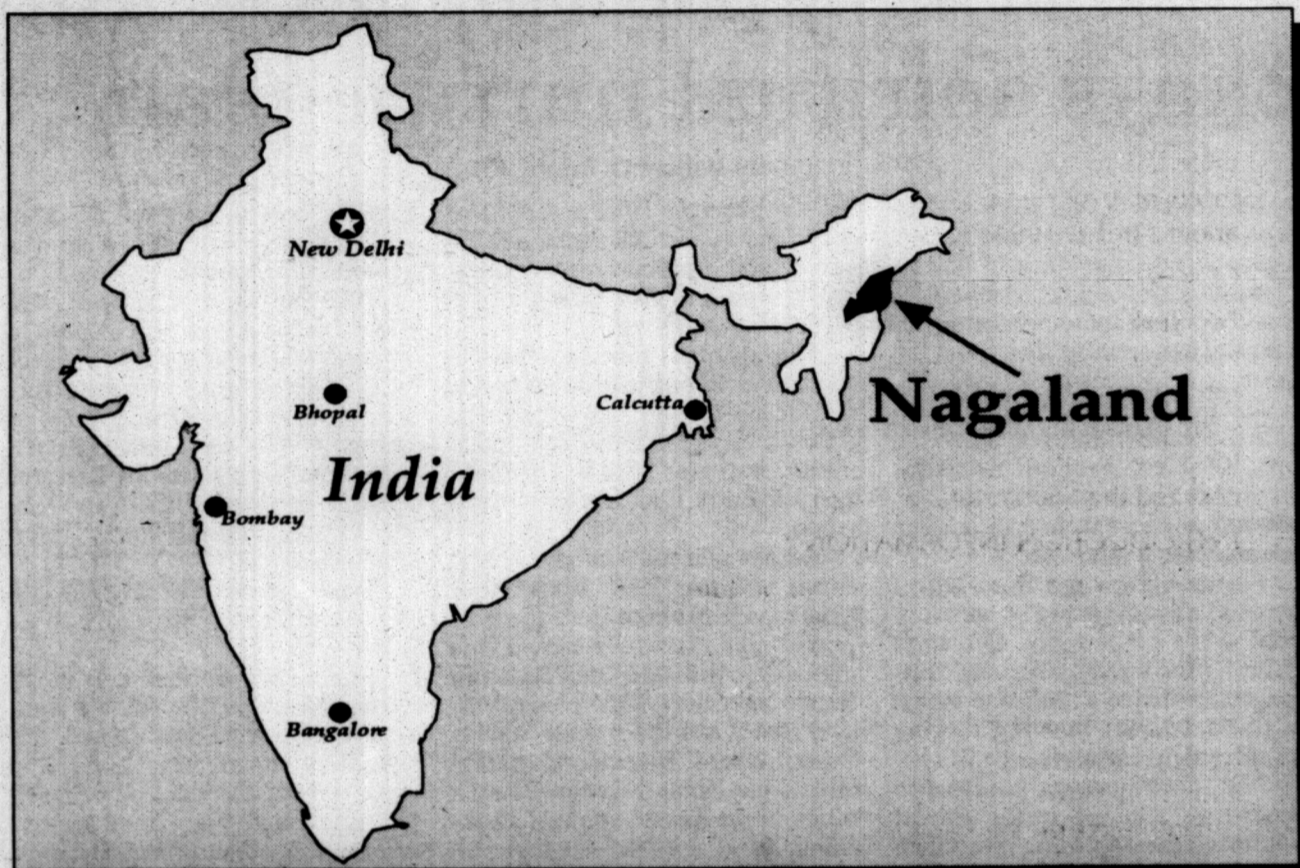
with us and in us" (John 14).

Aier, himself a Naga, came home to serve his people after 16 years in Chicago where he earned a doctorate from the University of Chicago. He and his wife lead and teach at OTC.

"I was not happy in Chicago, even though I had everything," he said. "I wanted to come home to serve my people."

Like other parts of the world, there are tribal and ethnic conflicts. The bloody conflict between Nagas and Kukis, many of whom are Baptists, is of special concern.

While in Calcutta, BWA General Secretary Denton Lotz and Cupit met with the general secretary of the Kuki Baptists who showed them gruesome pictures of people killed in the tribal fighting. He asked the BWA to help mediate the conflict.



Devotional...

Evangelism through music

By Russell Kyzar

This true testimony narrated by Alejandra Cabrera Rojas of Baranquilla, Colombia, reminded me of how often, at the first hint of ridicule, we silence our witness, thereby killing any opportunity to eventually penetrate the hearts of those who need our message most. I hope you were inspired, as I was, to "keep on singing" the gospel message.

"One day when I arrived home from work I went to the patio to handwash some clothes. It was already 6 p.m. when I started, so it began to get dark rather quickly. As the darkness grew, I became a little afraid. So I began to sing hymns and other songs I had learned in our regional Baptist choir with missionary Glenn Cantu (Colombia).

"The more I sang, the more assurance I felt, and without being aware, the louder I sang. As I did, my neighbors began to laugh at me and mimic me, making insulting remarks which I heard over the wall separating our yards. I didn't pay any attention to them and continued singing.

"After a while some of them began to say, 'Listen, she doesn't have such a bad voice after all.' Others said, 'Hey the fat girl sings "chevere" (a Spanish slang word equivalent to "cool" or "she's jammin").' Another said, 'Listen to the words of that song. Interesting, huh?' I just kept singing. I realized that they were all listening and waiting after each song to see what I would sing next.

"At that point the Lord continued to use me putting his message in me in a new way. I began to 'preach' them a 'sermon in song' in an improvised jazz style. As Bible verses came to my mind I would sing them and explain their message in this extemporaneous style. I discovered how beautiful it was to share the Lord in this totally new way.

"The next day my neighbors came to my house to ask me about 'that jazz record with a Christian message,' wanting to know where they could buy it so that they could learn the songs like I had. So I took advantage of the situation and shared Christ with them. They accepted my invitation to go to church with me the next Sunday."

Kyzar, from Natchez, serves with the editor's daughter Melinda and their three children, as foreign missionaries in San Jose, Costa Rica.

The uniqueness of the virgin birth

(ZPS) — In July 1978, a little girl named Louise Brown was born in England.

At 5 pounds, 12 ounces, Louise was a tiny baby, but what made her birth truly extraordinary was that she was conceived outside the human body.

Little Louise Brown was the first "test-tube baby."

Since then, many other children have been conceived by *in vitro* fertilization. It is amazing — unthinkable just a few years ago — but it is not miraculous. Conception occurs by a male seed fertilizing a female egg. Birth occurs normally. The only difference is the place of conception.

Scientists are experimenting with other amazing techniques to enable conception and birth by other than natural means. For example, sperm and eggs may now be frozen and thawed to conceive an *in vitro* fetus, even after years of dormancy. For years scientists have experimented with *parthenogenesis*. The name comes from two Greek words, *parthenos*,

meaning "virgin," and *genesis*, meaning "beginning" or "birth." Literally, then, parthenogenesis is the science of virgin birth. Laboratory experiments have revealed that in some cases parthenogenetic life can be generated in some ani-



mals. Among honeybees, for example, the unfertilized eggs develop naturally into drones. Artificial parthenogenesis has been used to produce silkworms since 1888. Many forms of inver-

tebrates and plants may be reproduced by parthenogenesis in laboratory experiments.

But, parthenogenesis can reproduce only genetically identical species. Frog eggs, for example, might be stimulated to develop by parthenogenesis into living frogs, but all of them will be female frogs genetically identical to the mother who laid the eggs. Also, parthenogenesis, cloning, and other experimental forms of reproduction have all proved impossible on the human level.

Even in the face of modern science, Christ's conception remains unique. Science can never explain how a virgin, a woman who had never had a sexual relationship with a man, could give birth to a male child. It was a miracle of God, the greatest miracle of conception the world has ever known.

— Source: *The Miracle of Christmas*, by John F. MacArthur Jr. (Zondervan Publishing House, 1989, 1993). MacArthur is pastor of Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, Calif.

HOUSE TOPS

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light: and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. Matthew 10:27 NA

December 16, 1993

HouseTops is a supplement to the **Baptist Record** and is produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

JAPAN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS 1994

Brotherhood Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

DATES

Starting date will be February 15, 1994. This is later than initial plans due to permits and the shipping of materials to the site. Teams members will work for three or 6 weeks with the second team scheduled about April 1, 1994.

COSTS

For those staying the full six weeks, all costs will be covered except for one night's lodging going and returning. This will be an overnight stay in Tokyo with sightseeing and will cost \$250. For those staying for 3 weeks, you will need to cover part of the plane cost and this should total about \$1,000.

INTRODUCTION INFORMATION

The reason for this request is that building costs in Japan are about \$200 per square foot. With teams being brought in from the United States, this can cut the cost for the Church about 40%. Also all materials are being shipped in from the U.S. so that teams will be familiar with supplies. Our work will be building a church in Hiroshima. We are hoping that two teams can complete the building and have it ready for use.

TEAMS AND TOOLS

Teams will be made up of 8 men and 2 women: The ladies will be cooking and taking care of clothes while the men build. Two from each team will need to secure international licenses, for a van that will be provided for travel.

The first team will be framing, roofing and finishing the exterior. The second team will do dry wall and finish work.

All tools will be provided except for personal hand tools. This supply will include power tools and saws.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Teams will live in two apartments in the area. An attempt is being made to secure mattresses for teams so that bedding will be like ours. A washer will be provided, but all drying is done outside. Apartments will be similar to ours.

The ladies will buy the food and prepare it. Most foods that we are used to eating are available.

HOW TO APPLY

Contact the Brotherhood Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205 for an application. ☐



"Building
our Life
on Him"

January 14-15, 1994

Ridgecrest Baptist Church
Madison, Miss.

Sessions led by Bob Hosford, Ph.D.

- Interactive learning
- Learn your personality styles and how to blend them
- Practice communication strategies for growth and enrichment
- Understand intimacy that leads to mental, physical and spiritual oneness
- Experience spiritual renewal

Sponsored by the
Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
Mose Dangerfield, Director
Robin Nichols, Family Ministry Consultant
MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION BOARD
"Helping to Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus"



See registration form
on back of HouseTops.

January 1-15, 1994

pray this day....

a new year...a new beginning...new resolves...new attitudes...all new in the same old framework; a framework is not always easily changed...a frame of mind can be changed with God's help...let's claim His promises

Prayer Ministry Office
Baptist Building, Jackson
PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

Saturday

that the mind of Christ may be in you, the frame of your mind

1

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
that you will remember the joy of your salvation experience, the frame of your relationship to God 2	thanking God for several times of specific guidance, the frame of your assurance 3	that God will lead you to minister today to someone who needs the frame of mind that Christ gives 4	for your neighbor who does not respond to your friendship in Christ's Name 5	for the child who returned to college in the wrong frame of mind 6	for your colleague whose family problems seem to have no satisfactory solution 7	for your church in its January Bible Study 8
that all of our Mississippi foreign missionaries would have an unusual sense of the power of prayer 9	for our denominational leaders and employees as they seek to know the mind of Christ 10	that all our Mississippi home missionaries would have an unusual sense of the power of prayer 11	for elderly folks who are not able to be out and about 12	asking God to help you get along better with the irregular person (s) in your life 13	asking God to help you get along better with the person who may feel you're the irregular person 14	asking again, that the mind of Christ may be in you, the frame of your mind, and hopefully, of your behavior 15

WHOM DO YOU SEE?

SEE YOUR YOUTH (10th-12th graders) singing solos, leading hymns, and playing their instruments for a panel of ministers of music; receiving their encouraging comments; and possibly being invited to participate in the State Youth Four Part Festival, February 26.



VOCAL FESTIVAL

Sing two selections

CONDUCTING FESTIVAL

Direct three hymns or conduct an anthem or instrumental ensemble (on the advanced level)

INSTRUMENTAL FESTIVAL

*(Woodwind, Brass, Strings, Pitched Percussion)
Play a solo piece of literature.*

SEE YOUR YOUTH Receiving Scholarships

Partial scholarships to Gulfshore, Ridgecrest or Glorieta Music Conferences
\$200.00 college music scholarships (Doubled when used at a Mississippi Baptist college)

AREA CONDUCTING, INSTRUMENTAL, VOCAL FESTIVALS Briarwood Drive Baptist Church, Jackson, January 17, 6:00 p.m.; North Oxford Baptist Church, January 17, 6:00 p.m.; First Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, January 18, 6:00 p.m. Registration Deadline January 10, 1994

For further information and registration forms, refer to your 1994 Youth Music Ministry Book, or contact your Church Music Department at 968-3800.

SEE YOUR YOUTH singing, leading hymns and playing instruments in their own home churches!

Deacon Emphasis Week

Highlighting Deacon Ministry in Your Church

Deacon Emphasis Week is a time set aside each year, usually in early January, to highlight deacon ministries and involve deacons in training and service.

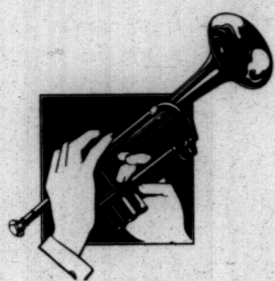
Purpose of the emphasis is to focus on the biblical role of deacons, build a team relationship in ministry, secure involvement in specific ministry, and develop skills for ministry.

To participate each deacon would choose two activities and perform them during a specified time.

Some of the suggested activities include studying a deacon diploma book, conducting a deacon retreat or conference, conducting pastor/staff appreciation day, entering the Deacon Family Ministry Plan, sponsoring a special ministry project, sponsoring a mission tour, organizing and conducting efforts to reclaim inactive church members, and conducting deacon-led witnessing/visitation/prospect-find activities. A number of other activities are suggested in a brochure available from the Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries Department. The department sends a certificate of recognition to each deacon body that officially participates.

For other projects and information, contact Matt Buckles, Consultant, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, phone 968-3800. ☐

HOUSE OF GOD



CHURCH ORCHESTRA FESTIVAL

February 19, 1994
Crossgates Baptist Church
in Brandon

The 1994 Church Orchestra Festival will be held at Crossgates Baptist Church in Brandon on Saturday, February 19, 1994. Guest orchestras which will be featured include Crossgates Baptist Church, Pine Lake Baptist Church, and the orchestra from First Baptist Church, Jackson.

Lee Poquette, formerly the associate minister of music from First Baptist Church, Jackson, and presently the Creative Director of Music Print at Word Music, Inc. in Nashville, will conduct the Mass Orchestra which formed from members of the guest orchestras and other instrumentalists who will be in attendance.

The Festival will begin with registration at 8:30 a.m. and will conclude at 1:00 p.m. ☐

SINGLE • ADULT • RALLY • '94



February 11-12, 1994

COLONIAL HEIGHTS
Baptist Church
Jackson, Miss.

SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

6:30 p.m. Registration
7:30 Food and Get Acquainted
8:30 Concert with REGGIE SMITH

SATURDAY

8:00 a.m. Breakfast
9:00 Theme interpretation and worship
FISHWORKS
9:30 Break
9:45 Conferences
10:35 Break
10:45 Conferences
11:35 Break
11:40 Conferences
12:30 Closure

CONFERENCES

• Creative Money Management
— Mitchell Blount
• Single Parenting
— Billy Hollifield
• Games and Activities for Singles Groups
— Ronnie Joe Webb

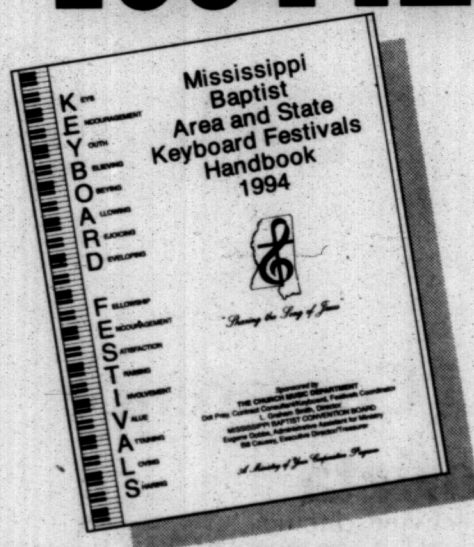
• Single Leader Forum with Resources
— John Shepherd
• Mission and Ministry for Singles
— Dottie Williamson
• Dealing with the Difficult Past
— Mark Simpson
• Single Men Understanding Single Women
— Cindy Still
• Single Women Understanding Single Men
— Gulce Smith
• Understanding Yourself and Others
— Bob Hosford
• Handling Grief
— Bradley Pope
• Living with Divorce
— Kim Booth

SPECIAL GUEST PERSONALITIES

REGGIE SMITH
Christian Vocalist, Orlando

FISHWORKS
Christian Drama-Music Team,
Atlanta

1994 Area & State Keyboard Festivals



NOTE:
REGISTRATION DUE
MONDAY, DECEMBER 20,
1993

AREA	LOCATION	FESTIVAL LEADER	PHONE
Thursday, January 27, 1994, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.			
Area 2	Harrisburg Baptist Church, 1800 West Main St., Tupelo	Darwin Brooks Diane Smith Slater Murphy Bob Jones Mark Moore Carol Watts Kathy Vail Rick Carter Earline Carter Richard Green	C 842-6917 C 842-6917 C 328-2924 C 372-8651 C 684-2971 C 684-2971 C 264-7443 C 544-0100 C 649-5711 C 649-5711
Area 4	Fairview Baptist Church, 201 Airline Road, Columbus		
Area 5	Alta Woods Baptist Church, 168 Colonial Dr., Jackson		
Area 7	First Baptist Church, 1700 Delaware Ave., McComb		
Area 8	First Baptist Church, 510 West Pine St., Hattiesburg		
Area 8	First Baptist Church, 605 Fifth St. Laurel		
Friday, January 28, 1994, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.			
Area 9	First Baptist Church, 40 53rd St., Gulfport	Tammy Turnage	H 864-8707
Saturday, January 29, 1994, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.			
Area 1	Colonial Hills Baptist Church, 2101 Colonial Hills Dr., Southaven	Elizabeth Cothorn John Burke Alice Kathryn Turner Carol Durham Gary Miller Jim Hess Harry Tillery	H 781-2582 C 334-9452 H 332-8959 H 924-0469 C 924-5620 C 636-2493 C 425-5106
Area 3	First Baptist Church, 407 Main St., Greenville		
Area 5	Morrison Heights Baptist Church, 201 Morrison Dr., Clinton		
Area 5	First Baptist Church, 1607 Cherry St., Vicksburg		
Area 6	Poplar Springs Drive Baptist Church, 4032 Poplar Springs Dr., Meridian		

Students in grades one through twelve may participate. Each participant, with the assistance of their teacher, church music staff or festival leader, will select a category for participation.

Mississippi Baptist Area and State Keyboard Festivals Handbook 1994 has been mailed to the Baptist church organists, church pianists, piano and organ teachers in Mississippi.

Questions concerning the keyboard festivals may be answered by contacting the Festival Leader in your area or Dot Pray, Keyboard Contract Consultant, Festivals Coordinator, Church Music Department, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, telephone 968-3800.

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST ALL-STATE YOUTH CHOIR

• Auditions •

5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

February 5-21, 1994

For 9th - 12th Graders

- February 5, (9 a.m.-2 p.m.) Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Building
- February 7, Harrisburg BC, Tupelo
- February 8, North Oxford BC, Oxford
- February 15, Midway BC, Meridian
- February 17, FBC, Biloxi
- February 18, Easthaven BC, Brookhaven
- February 19, University BC, Hattiesburg (9 a.m.-2 p.m.)
- February 21, FBC, Greenwood

Auditions will include:

- A solo (no tapes)
- Tonal Memory
- Sightreading
- Singing their voice part from a hymn

Audition Fee: \$3.00 per person

Registration Deadline: One week prior to audition. Contact the Church Music Department at 968-3800 for details.

CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATORS CONFERENCE

January 13, 1994

Broadmoor Baptist Church
787 E. Northside Drive, Jackson

This conference is jointly sponsored by Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department, MBCB, and Hinds-Madison Baptist Association

- **PURPOSE:** An update on Reporting and Requirements for the Internal Revenue Service
- **TARGET AUDIENCE:** Representatives from any church needing updating on tax issues.
- **FINANCES:** There is no charge for the conference. (You will be on your own for lunch.)
- **PERSONNEL:** Gene Hill, Senior Appeals Officer, Internal Revenue Service, Austin, Texas. Member of Hyde Park Baptist Church, Austin, Texas

Information will include: IRS publications, Packet of forms, Handling of Contribution Records, Record Keeping, Designated Contributions, Employment Taxes, Ministers Income, Social Security for Members of the Clergy.

The conference begins at 9 a.m. with registration and concludes at 3 p.m. For further information contact: Julius Thompson, 968-3800 extension 3908 or James Webster, 362-8676. □

Marriage Enrichment Seminar, January 14-15

REGISTRATION

Cost: \$15 per couple—includes all materials, light breakfast, brunch and child care

Name _____

Address _____

Church _____

Does your church have a Family Ministry director?

Name _____

Child care needed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name _____ Age _____

Registration Deadline: January 13, 1994

Please return to: Robin Nichols, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205

WMU Conference at Glorieta

"A Time to Grow" is the theme of the Glorieta WMU Conference taking place July 15-22. A special group tour has been arranged to make the trip easier, according to Mississippi WMU director Marjean Patterson. Cost of the tour is \$790 round-trip from Jackson.

The tour includes round trip air fare between Jackson and Albuquerque, vans for sightseeing, seven nights accommodations, all meals at Glorieta, registration and conference fees, and flight insurance.

A deposit of \$170 per person is required by Jan. 25 to confirm enrollment. Make checks payable to WMU and mail to WMU, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.

Air fare is based on special rates by Delta Air Lines and subject to change. Travel arrangements are by International Tours of Clinton. □

Letters to the editor

Humanist invasion

Editor:

I am astonished that the school prayer issue in Jackson has not been engaged where it must be fought, i.e., as two competing religious viewpoints which both seek supremacy in the government school system.

Christians have been sold, and most have bought, the myth of neutrality which is promoted by the humanists in the government school system. They have been told that it is possible to teach academics from a religiously neutral position. But the contention that Christian prayer is religious, and therefore must be banned, is itself the religious position of secular humanists (*Humanist Manifesto II*, para. 9). So it is not a matter of shall religion be taught in government schools. It is a matter of whose religion shall be taught. The prohibition of Christian prayer is the allowance of the religious humanist position to prevail in government schools.

I illustrate this thusly: Evolution is the religious creed of the humanists (*Humanist Manifesto I*, para. 1, 2). Yet it is taught in government schools at taxpayers' expense and is labeled "religiously neutral." Homosexuality, birth control, abortion, suicide, and euthanasia are taught as rights in government schools. All of these are the religious creed of humanists (*II*, para. 6).

There is a solution to the prayer controversy. If the 490 children who want prayer in schools would withdraw from the system, the state could shut down that school. The Christians could then buy the buildings and start their own school. Then they could pray in the name of Jesus, and not just a

generic prayer to a generic deity for a generic purpose. But as long as they sacrifice their children to the god of the State, the humanists will teach them the humanist values, and they will prevail.

L.B. "Cap" Pooser
Brookhaven

Church resolves

Editor:

Whereas we are enjoined in the Holy Spirit to "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thes. 5:17), to pray "everywhere" (1 Tim. 2:8), and to pray in the name of the Lord Jesus (John 16:23), we, the members of Mount Moriah Church, Bogue Chitto, Miss., do go on public record as supporting voluntary prayer in our public and private school systems.

It is very apparent that our nation has forsaken the great principles upon which it was founded. Violence is rampant on our streets and in our schools, our homes are disintegrating, and immorality is in vogue. It is time for America to turn to God, to forsake ungodliness, and to strengthen its moral structure once more (2 Chron. 7:14).

Danny Moss, pastor
And members of
Mount Moriah Church
Bogue Chitto

Reaffirms heritage

Editor:

In the Nov. 11 issue (of *The Baptist Record*), [Keith] Powell wondered if we really understood our heritage. Encouraged that anyone would openly express such thoughts, I offer the following:

In 1925 we exchanged precisely stated, Bible-based doctrinal principles and confessional integrity for a program of outreach. Ortho-

doxy came to be measured, primarily as support of this program, and secondarily as the belief of a system of truth taught in the Bible, departing radically from the faith and practice of the founders, who knew there could be good fruit only with proper root. Such indifference to truth has led to the current, pervasive neglect and ignorance of the Scriptures.

For the sake of the program, what the founders stood for, and the teachings of grace which they held so dear had to be ignored and anyone attempting to examine them publicly labeled divisive and dangerous. A theology more liberal than theirs had to be adopted. It had to be so. Their lives were unimpeachable. Their defense of the faith unassailable.

The effects have been significant. The program has grown to world-wide influence. But among all this apparent success, our people starve for lack of good, solid Bible knowledge. The Christ we serve is often not the Christ of Scripture. This is a tragedy of eternal importance. Way down the list, but still important is that we have scoffed at the spiritual lessons our forbears would have taught us. We have abandoned the "old paths" and "hewn us out cisterns."

It is my prayer that pastors and laymen alike would dedicate themselves to faithfulness to God's Word similar to that of the founders; proclaiming God's whole counsel, teaching always all that grace teaches, that our people's faith "should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:5).

Gordon L. Bass
Hattiesburg

Documents claims

Editor:

Karen Wright, *Baptist Record*, Dec. 2, wrote about the alleged persecution of Mormons in Mississippi, though she gave no real documentation for most of her claims. There is historical docu-

mentation for the Mormon Mountain Meadows Massacre of over 100 non-Mormon men, women, and children in Utah.

Mormons teach that there are many gods, that Mormon men may become gods, that God was not always God, but progressed his way into godhood, that God has a father and mother God, as did that Father God, etc. Jesus Christ is the spirit-brother of Satan. No one can enter the celestial kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith. President Brigham Young added, speaking of Adam, "...He is our father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do." Brigham Young also declared, "The only men who become gods, even the sons of god, are those who enter into polygamy."

Joseph Smith said of all churches and Christians, "...they were all wrong... their creeds were an abomination... that those professors, (Christians) were all corrupt." Mormon apostle Orson Pratt wrote that Christians were the "whore of Babylon."

Mormons claim to be the One True Church, and only baptized Mormons can go to the highest heaven.

We need to "speak the truth in love," while obeying God's Word to "contend for the faith," "Judge righteous Judgment," and know false prophets and teachers by their fruits (Eph. 4:15; Jude, v. 3; John 7:24; John 7:16, 20).

We must defend to the death the right of Mormons to be Mormons, atheists to be atheists, and Baptists to be Baptists, etc., and Karen's right to share her views.

Karen asked about Southern Baptists, "Is there anyone you can get along with?" Southern Baptist evangelist Billy Graham, and other evangelists, often have hundreds of denominations working together to reach a city for Christ. Mormons as the One True Church cannot do this. Error must be exposed, but true Christians in scores of denominations can and

do cooperate. God loves Mormons, Christ shed his blood for them, and he alone, not some church, is "...the way, the truth, and the life." I love Mormons, not Mormonism.

Floyd C. McElveen
Petal

Cautions on bill intro

Editor:

I recently heard that legislation was to be introduced in the Mississippi legislature next session to require or allow the Bible to be taught as a historical document in public school classrooms. While such a bill probably would arise from good intentions, and while it appears to be a wonderful thing to do at first glance, I would like to suggest that caution be observed.

We are talking about God's Holy Word, of which the Abstract of Principles adopted by our own Southern Seminary in 1858 said, "The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain, and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience."

The gospel of John begins, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and Word was God." This is the Word that God spoke in the beginning to create the heavens and earth, light, sky, dry ground, vegetation, stars, animal life, and, finally, human life. God simply spoke and all that sprang into existence. Should the record of such a Word be shelved along with textbooks and taught no differently? Who would teach it, and what would they say about it? Would you want your children to spend a couple of hours a day with a lost person teaching the Bible from a historical perspective?

A promise from God reassures me that he is sovereign, and that his will comes to pass. Nevertheless, I do not believe that teaching his Word as a "historical document" will produce a sweet savor to his nostrils. At worst, it will leave our children with a historical knowledge of biblical times and absolutely no saving knowledge of God. At its ultimate worst, it will leave our children with the idea that Scripture is basically historical mythology, which will have been debunked by respected (but spiritually dead) classroom teachers.

Look what has happened with the institutionalization of Thanksgiving and Christmas. Both are recognized legal holidays and, because of that, Thanksgiving is generally referred to as "Turkey Day" and Christmas has become "Xmas." The government has, in effect, removed all religious significance from both days. I fear that adopting the Bible as nothing more than another history book will produce a generation of people who believe that God's Word is nothing more than a history lesson, and that will have tragic consequences.

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Staff Changes

New Salem Church, Liberty, has called **Kevin Hinton** as pastor effective Dec. 5. A native of Ridgeville, S.C., he is a graduate of New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Parkview Church, Picayune, as minister of youth education.



Hinton

Woolmarket Church, Biloxi, has called **Randy Rich** as pastor effective Nov. 11. Rich previously served for five years at Trinity Church, Vicksburg. He is a graduate of Samford University, New Orleans Seminary, and holds the doctor of ministry degree from Southern Seminary.

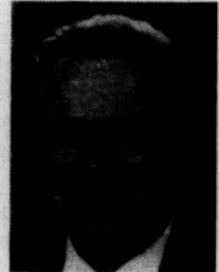
Rawls Springs Church, Hattiesburg, has called **Clyde L. Carraway** as minister of music and education. A reception was held in his honor on Dec. 5. A native Mississippian, Carraway was born in Agricola. He is a graduate of Mississippi College and holds the master of music and doctor of education degree from Utah State University. His previous place of service was First Church, Lucedale.



Carraway

David T. Taylor, graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary, is the new minister of music at First Church, Tampa, Fla. He previously served at First Church, Columbia, S.C.

H. Cliff Davis has accepted the pastorate of **Bolton Church**, Hinds-Madison Association, effective Nov. 15. A native of Ludlow, Davis is a graduate of Clarke College, Mississippi College, and Southern Seminary. He has served pastorates in Rankin, Scott, and Hinds-Madison Associations. For the past 12 years he served as associational missionary and state missions director for West Virginia Convention under missionary appointment by the Home Mission Board.



Davis

The Baptist Hymnal released in a new Home & Family version

NASHVILLE (BP) — The Baptist Hymnal, released in 1991 for use in churches, has been unveiled with a new title and supplementary materials for use in family worship.

Publication in December of The Baptist Hymnal for Home & Family was announced during annual planning meetings for Southern Baptist state and national church music leaders, Dec. 1-3 in Nashville.

Wesley L. Forbis, editor of the hymnal and director of the Baptist Sunday School Board's Church Music Ministries Department, said the new version is designed to help make "those great hymns which you sing in church each week an even more important

source of strength and assurance in your home and family worship."

Content of the hymnal is identical to the pew edition, which has sold almost 2.5 million copies since its release. The usage guide for the Home & Family edition

Luther Rice's Dorothy Williams dies

LITHONIA, Ga. (BP) — Dorothy "Dottie" Williams, wife of Luther Rice Seminary Chancellor Gene Williams, died Dec. 6 at a Decatur, Ga., hospital of congestive heart failure after a three-year battle with bone cancer.

Mrs. Williams, of Lithonia, Ga., was involved in her husband's Gene Williams Evangelistic Association since its founding in 1959 as an administrator, bookkeeper, and, during the 1960s, producer and director of its TV ministry. Her husband also was president of Luther Rice Seminary from 1982-92, when he became chancellor.

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Anne Davis recognized

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — C. Anne Davis, Woman's Missionary Union professor of church social work at Southern Seminary, has received the Award for Distinguished Christian Service in Social Work from the North American Association of Christians in Social Work.

Davis, a faculty member at the Louisville, Ky., school since 1970, became the founding dean of the seminary's Carver School of Church Social Work in 1984. She served in that role until this year when she stepped down to devote more time to teaching.

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The reason for the season

By Floyd F. Higginbotham

Once during the mad rush of the Christmas season I saw a sign in front of a business that read, "Remember the reason for the season." That sign really caught my attention. I thought, "What is the reason behind all this? If there is a reason, what is it?"

Does the season just give an excuse for a frivolous celebration of something the world knows little about? Is the reason found in the sometimes ridiculous display of colored lights strung on streets, businesses, and homes in an undeclared contest of one outdoing the other.

Maybe it's the parties and the drunken revelry that go along with many of them, when people get stoned out of their heads, drive automobiles, and kill other people.

Perhaps it is the grotesque commercialism that demands we go on spending sprees and spend money we don't have to swap gifts with people we don't even like. Or the swapping of gifts in the home, school, and church to the point that those who have nothing with which to buy are made to feel alone and left out?

Is the "reason for the season" the tainted secularism that puts a legendary figure from the North Pole at the center of it all, with parents standing in long lines to have their children's pictures made with him sitting on the "throne of Christmas?"

None of this can be the real reason for the season. The real reason is tucked away in God's Word and almost forgotten by a pleasure-mad world.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6, KJV).

What is the reason for the season? It is the celebration of the birthday of the King; the King of kings, the Lord of lords! There is no other reason to celebrate. There is no other reason to sing! There is no other reason to give!

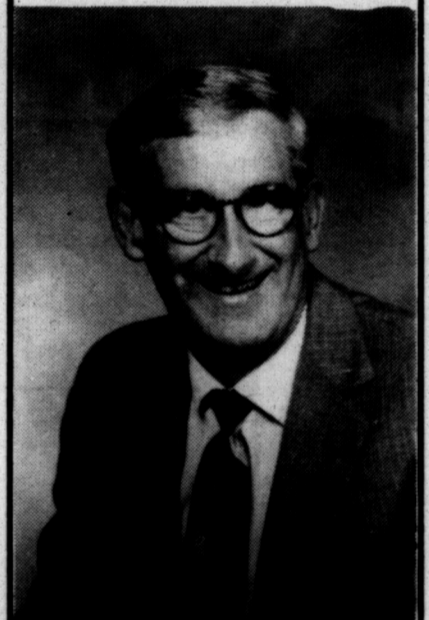
If there is any other "reason for the season" it's the wrong reason.

Higginbotham is pastor of Pleasant Hill Church near Brookhaven.

Names in the News

Ray Newcomb, pastor of First Church, Millington, Tenn. (near Memphis), was recently elected president of the Tennessee Convention. Newcomb, a Blue Mountain graduate, formerly pastored in North Corinth and Picayune.

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ANOTHER wrote: "This book is desperately needed in our society today. It is a bed-rock proof for establishing the right foundation for family formation and development. Indispensable mass of information for both married and singles." — *David and Kay Jolley, Community Leaders, Memphis, Tenn.*

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SPRINGHILL

From page 3

varied widely, from a professional who walked the tops of tall rafters shooting nails with a compressed-air gun, to folks who went home late that afternoon with black and blue thumbs.

Gooseneck trailers filled with building materials lined the lot, and human bootprints shared ground with fresh deer tracks.

All that remains of the burned church has been pushed into a towering pile at the back of the property. A hand-crank water well at the front of the property has served a lonely vigil since the fire.

Honea, who has supervised volunteer church building crews for 11 years, said he is heartened by the response and plans to continue work on the church as long as finances hold out.

"Money provided, we will see this through to completion. This surpasses anything I could have imagined," he said.

A building fund has been set up for the church at First Bank in Summit, Honea pointed out, and the fund is about \$8,000 short of

the estimated amount needed to finish the project.

Tax-deductible contributions can be made to Springhill Freewill Baptist Church, care of First Bank, P.O. Box 619, Summit, MS 39666.

Volunteers interested in working on the church can contact Rex Cowart of Summit at (601) 276-9704.

"Mother Gaten," as she is known around those parts, marvelled at the large corps of black and white men and women who stopped construction at mid-morning and took time for thanksgiving, devotion, and prayer.

"I couldn't imagine this as a young girl," she said, as her daughter climbed atop a pickup tailgate to lead the workers in singing, "Amazing Grace."

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Thursday, December 16, 1993

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

Just for the Record

Super Sitters, a program preparing responsible babysitters, will be offered by Mississippi Baptist Medical Center from 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Dec. 30. The class, which will be taught by nurses, includes safety tips, information on child development, and suggestions for appropriate play activities. The cost is \$8. For preregistration, call education services, 968-1712.

The William Carey College Holiday Baseball Camp will be held Dec. 28-30 from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. each day for ages 7-17. Special guest instructor will be former Carey Coach John Stephenson who is now a coach with the New York Mets. The fee is \$70. Call 582-6192 for more information.

The adult choir of Terry Road Church, Jackson, will present a Christmas program on Dec. 19 at 7 p.m. James Netherland, music director, will direct. Henry J. Bennett is pastor.

First Church of Sharon, Laurel, will present its Christmas pageant, "Memories of Christmas," Dec. 19 and 20 at 7 p.m. For more information, call (601) 428-5319. Nelson Crozier is pastor.



First Church, Brookhaven, held a ground breaking service on Oct. 31 for the beginning of a \$2.2 million renovation/restoration project. The project will include new preschool space, a new commercial kitchen, prayer room, handbell room, additional senior adult space, a new youth department, large fellowship hall, and other meeting rooms. Pictured are Marion Cooley, chairman of deacons; Paul Jackson, general contractor; Millard Smith, building committee co-chairman and church administrator; Becky Vaughn, publicity chairman of building finance committee; Bob Self, pastor; Tom Moak, chairman, executive building committee; Bill Sones, chairman, building finance committee; Billy Hickman, chairman, finance committee; and Larry Sones, architect.



Members of DRAWN TOGETHER, a contemporary singing group from Mississippi State University Baptist Student Union, are pictured, seated from left, Jason Robertson, Pontotoc, and Jason O'Brian, Louisville; standing from left are Ginger Tedder, Vardaman, and Barbie Wiggs, Marks. DRAWN TOGETHER is available to sing for worship services, youth retreats, and other activities. For more information, contact the MSU Baptist Student Union, P.O. Box BU, Mississippi State, MS 39762 or call 323-5761.

The Personnel Committee of the Rankin County Association will accept resumes through Dec. 31, 1993, for the position of Director of Missions. The director will give general supervision to the association's 58 member-churches.

Send resumes to:

Rev. Odus Jackson, Chairman,
RCBA Personnel Committee,
P.O. Box 1257,
Brandon, MS 39043

Names in the News

Mark Wicker was ordained to the ministry on June 27 by Gum Grove Church, Lincoln Association. He is pastor of New Zion Church, Mississippi Association. His father, Thomas Wicker, brought the charge.



Wicker

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In a single flash, 90
people lost their house.

Uniform God's gift, our Savior



By Michael O'Brien
Luke 2

Good news! We all love to hear good news. Someone got a promotion on the job, a child graduates from college, another grandchild is born, the war is over, the cancer is gone — all are examples of good news. However, none can compare with the news that the angels brought to the shepherds that first Christmas so many years ago, "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord" (v. 11, NIV). This news of a Savior is something that every Christian should feel compelled to share with those who are lost.

The birth of the Savior (vv. 1-7). What a humble beginning, born in a manger. Joseph and Mary had made a trip that was required by law. When God sets out to fulfill a prophecy, he will use means that seem so ordinary to men. In this case, it was a simple trip to fulfill the law of a census. God had already spoken of the birthplace of Christ in Micah 5:2; he was to be born in Bethlehem, the city of David. Was there really no room at the inn? Did the innkeeper realize Mary's condition? Did our Lord really have to lie in a cattle feeder? These questions will be answered one day in heaven, but here is one for today: Is there room in your heart, in your life, for the Lord?

Someone has said, "Jesus is Lord of all, or he is not Lord at all." Jesus wants to be first in your life, and Christmas would be a great time to surrender your life to him.

The brightness of the appearance (vv. 8-9). We will never understand the terror of the shepherds on that night long years ago. Once on a night mission while I was serving in the Marine Corps, we set up just over a hill from a launch pad for an "honest John" rocket. About midnight the rocket was launched with a deafening roar and a light that made the sky like day. As we dove for the ground, we were terrified, we did not know what was happening. These shepherds were seeing and hearing things that they had never heard before, and they were stunned.

The blessedness of the message (vv. 10-14). "Do not be afraid" (v. 10). Somehow my heart tells me that the angel had the most soothing, reassuring voice that the shepherds had ever heard. Heaven's chorus began to sing as the message of the Messiah's birth was explained to the shepherds, and they were instructed where and how to find him. What were they thinking as they heard these words? "Strips of cloth? Lying in a manger?" These are questions that perhaps we would want answered. However, these shepherds could think of only one thing: "Let's find the Savior."

The boldness of the visit (vv. 15-20). Do shepherds visit kings? These shepherds did; and they did so hurriedly (v. 16). What they found was just exactly what they were looking for, and just exactly what the angels had announced to them. We are left to wonder how long they lingered at the place of his birth. We feel sure that they were there long enough to tell Joseph and Mary what had happened, because "Mary pondered" these things in her heart. Perhaps it was their commitment as shepherds to do a good job that caused them to leave. The shepherds returned, verse 20 tells us, and we assume that they returned to their sheep. The change in their lives is evidenced in their manner of returning, "glorifying and praising God" (v. 20).

My prayer for you is that your encounter with Christ this Christmas season will result in your "glorifying and praising God."

O'Brien is pastor, First Church, Lexington.

Bible Book The birth of the Savior



By Jewel P. Merritt
Matthew 1, 2

One of the things I like best about Christmas is the gathering of family and friends to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior. Christmas carols and special music help prepare our hearts for sermons honoring the Lord Christ. It is truly a joyous time of year!

The birth of any new baby into a family brings a time of anticipation. When God's Son was born of Mary, angels sang a song of welcome and his star announced his arrival.

Jesus' birth a fulfillment of prophecy (1:22-23). Mankind's need for a Savior did not take the Lord God by surprise. "(You were redeemed) with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world" (1 Peter 1:19-20a, NIV).

The words Matthew quotes are from the prophet Isaiah and include my favorite name for Jesus — Emmanuel, God with us. That makes me want to join the hymn writer in saying, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine."

The coming of the wise men (2:1-2). Through the years, people have added imagined details to the birth of Christ. For example, some folks are sure that Mary rode a donkey to Bethlehem. If she did, Luke does not mention it. Some people are positive there were three wise men. Matthew mentions the number of gifts, but not the number of men. Matthew does tell us that they came to Jerusalem seeking the King of the Jews. Where else would one go when seeking a newborn king but to the capital city of that country?

We do not know what star caught the Magi's attention. We do know that these men studied the stars and were convinced that it was "his star." God drew these men to his Son with "his star."

Herod's inquiry and plot (2:3-8). Perhaps you have seen shirts saying, "If Mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy." In verse 3, Matthew said that when Herod heard about the Magi's search for the newborn king, he was troubled — and so was the city of Jerusalem. The citizens knew that Herod was an evil, murdering king. His victims included members of his own family. No wonder the people were troubled when Herod was troubled!

Herod called together the chief priests and scribes and asked where the Christ was to be born. They correctly identified Bethlehem in Judea as the site. The words Matthew quoted are found in Micah 5:2. Through the years the prophets had foretold the coming of the Savior.

Calling the Magi to him secretly, Herod asked when the star had appeared. Herod pretended that he desired to go and worship the new king also.

The wise men's worship of the Savior (2:9-12). The wise men left Jerusalem and followed the star to the place where the Child was. Seeing the star again caused the Magi to rejoice. The fact that Matthew said they came into the house would indicate that they did not arrive on the night Jesus was born.

Their first act after seeing the young Child was to fall down and worship him. Then they presented him with royal gifts: gold for a King, frankincense for a Priest, and myrrh for the One who was to die. Warned in a dream of Herod's plot to kill Jesus, the Magi returned to their country another way.

In his commentary on Matthew, William Barclay pointed out that even at his birth, Jesus divided people into three groups. The first group, like Herod, hated Jesus and tried to destroy him. The chief priests and scribes, the second group, were completely indifferent to Jesus. The third group joins the Magi in praise, adoration, and worship.

What gift do we plan to make to the King of kings? Is it our Lottie Moon offering? Is it the most expensive gift we have planned to give anyone?

Have we included a time of praise and worship in our holiday schedules? When that time has ended, will we join the shepherds in spreading the word about the Savior (Luke 2:17)?

Christmas is a time of great joy! It is my prayer for you that you will sense the presence of Emmanuel in your life in new and wondrous ways during Christmas and the New Year!

Merritt is a member of First Church, Jackson.

Life and Work God blesses faithfulness



By Mark A. Rathel
Luke 2

Acts of religious devotion enhance our relationship to God. Through such acts, we open ourselves to receive blessings and benefits from God. A needed message at the close of the 20th century is that God still honors and blesses faithfulness. No, faithfulness might not produce prosperity. Insight into God's will, however, develops in the context of submission and obedience.

The people God blessed with insight into Jesus' celebrative birth shared a common characteristic. Simeon and Anna, as well as Mary and Joseph, diligently observed God's commands. The key phrase in Chapter 2 is "according to" (vv. 22, 24, 38, 42). The characters involved in the birth drama of Chapter 2 acted "according to the law of Moses." They gave diligent and faithful attentiveness to the details of the customs, feasts, and religious rites of the Jewish faith.

God continues to bless faithfulness with the gifts of joy, peace, and thankfulness.

Christmas is a celebration of joy (vv. 10-11). Luke 2 contains two imperial edicts. Caesar Augustus issued an imperial decree ordering a census for the Roman Empire. The decree of Caesar burdened the people. In contrast, God issued a decree of joyful good news to all the people. Yahweh, not Caesar, is the real imperial power.

God's royal proclamation addressed the longings and desires of humanity. In the ancient world, "Savior" was a political title. Emperors and lesser political office-holders eagerly claimed to be saviors. They promised deliverance from military dangers, disease, and human predicament. God's Son actually provides release from bondage to evil, sin, and death. The Jews eagerly looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, God's agent for setting things right. As Savior and Christ, Jesus fulfills the hopes of humanity expressed in the titles Savior and Messiah.

Christmas is a celebration of peace (vv. 25-32). In obedience to the law, Joseph and Mary presented the Child to the Lord in the temple. Through the guidance of the Spirit, God enabled the faithful Simeon to see the Messiah. Simon is a more common form of the name Simeon.

Luke described Simeon with a fourfold characterization: righteous, devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and Spirit-led. The term "devout" describes one who cautiously and carefully completed religious duties. In Isaiah 52:9 God promised to console Israel by redeeming her. Simeon anxiously awaited the salvation of Israel. Through the leadership of the Spirit, Simeon encountered Joseph, Mary, and the Child at the temple.

Upon seeing Jesus, Simeon prayed. He addressed God, literally, as Despot. Simeon viewed his role as a servant eager to fulfill the Sovereign's commands. Simeon could depart in peace, not because he had fulfilled his task, but because God had completed his Word. He looked at the Child and claimed to see God's salvation. Simeon, therefore, could die with no regrets or frustrations. Life for a faithful believer is rewarding and meaningful.

Christmas is a celebration of thanksgiving (vv. 36-38). Luke described Anna with an unusual number of details. Luke's emphasis concerning Anna was her single-minded devotion to God. Again, God graciously rewarded a servant's faithfulness in acts of religious devotion with insight into his activity. Anna proclaimed a relation between the Child and the redemption of the city of Jerusalem.

Anna's response provides insights into how contemporary Christians may properly celebrate Christmas. Anna profusely and continuously thanked God. In addition, she gave witness concerning the significance of the birth.

Have you thanked God for the birth of the Savior? Have you witnessed to others concerning the significance of the birth?

Rathel is pastor, Bay Vista Church, Biloxi.

THE VILLAGE VIEW



The Baptist Children's Village

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ACCREDITED



COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION OF
SERVICES FOR FAMILIES AND
CHILDREN INC.

Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

OCT. 1-31, 1993 MEMORIALS

Dr. William McCain
Mrs. G. E. Ingram
F. R. McCarty
Mr. Danny R. Gregory
Mr. R. R. (Mac) McCullough
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Dill
M/M W.J., Willard, Bea & Cliff
McDade

Mr. & Mrs. Edgar J. Garrett
Mr. M. C. McDaniel
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Harrell
Lewis and Maxine Bond
Mr. Major McDaniel
Mr. & Mrs. Roy Cliburn
Mrs. Grace McElveen
Mr. and Mrs. Carl Draught
Mrs. Marion Gordon
Mr. & Mrs. L. W. Guy
Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Vigneault
Mrs. Myna Van Norman
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Hazlewood

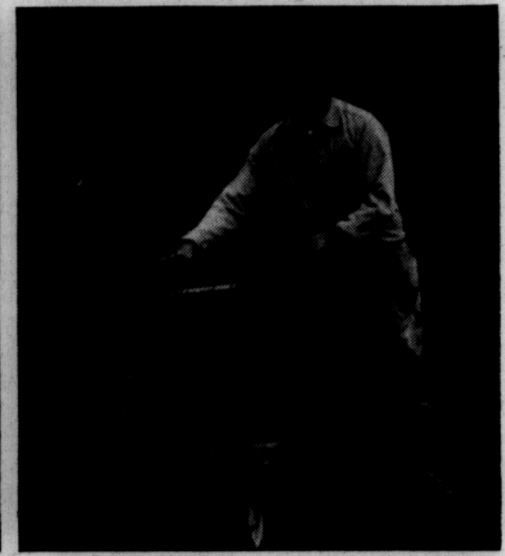
Mrs. M. C. Hamilton, Jr.
Mrs. Margaret McLelland
Mrs. H. L. Thompson
Mr. W. T. McMullen
Mr. & Mrs. Charles G. Maske
Vernon McNeely
Ladies Bible Class II,
Galilee BC, Gloster
Mr. Henry McPherson
Mrs. Mary B. Ford
J. J. Meyers
Mrs. Essie Mae Meyers
(to be continued)



The Baptist Children's Village Board of Trustees enjoyed an annual Christmas dinner following their quarterly meeting on November 30. New Board Members presented at this meeting were (pictured left to right) Rev. Austin Moore, Independence; Mrs. Ruth Thomas, Vicksburg; and Mr. J.V. Parker, Laurel.



Christmas 1993 has proved to be a year of giving. Already kids across our state, on each of our campuses have been the recipients of generous people. Many groups have provided Christmas in the form of gifts and/or parties. One of those is Farm Bureau Insurance Company. Farm Bureau employees provided a generous Christmas party for India Nunnery Campus residents December 3. Santa was present to hand each child a stocking and gifts. Village residents also enjoyed LOTS of Christmas goodies. Pictured is Mark Thompson, age 14, receiving his gifts from Santa. On behalf of all Village residents and staff — **THANK YOU FARM BUREAU!!!**



In recent days The Baptist Children's Village has been the recipient of services provided by volunteers who participated in **Corporate Community Service Week** by IBM of Jackson. Representatives from the following organizations helped The Baptist Children's Village with painting and landscaping: **Mississippi Farm Bureau, Deposit Guaranty National Bank, IBM, LDDS, MobileComm, Trustmark National Bank, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Irby Companies.** Pictured are a few volunteers who gave of their time to make The Village a better home for your children.

Dear Friends,

I was driving around the campus and an old Christmas classic "I'll Be Home for Christmas" came on my car radio. As I listened to the words of this familiar Christmas song I drove past a group of your children. they were walking down to the gymnasium where a church group was preparing a Christmas party for them. As I looked into their happy faces I was reminded of all the kind and generous blessings that always come to children during the holidays. I whispered a prayer of thanksgiving for each of you and your love and support. In that same moment I was reminded that if every child here were asked what they most wanted at this season, their replies would be unanimous — "We want to be home for Christmas." For many of your children this is not possible and that makes Christmas such an emotionally difficult time here on the campus.

I am personally asking you right now to remember your children here at The Village. I realize that no physical or financial gift can fulfill their deepest needs, but I do hope that you realize that much of the funds from our Christmas appeal help us meet food needs throughout the entire year. As you plan your gift list please remember your larger family here at the BCV.



My prayer is that God will richly bless each of you at this season.

*I am humbly,
Ronny*

capsules

FORMER DRUG COUNTRY EXPERIENCES REVIVAL: BOGOTA, Colombia (EP) — According to Ed Meyer, director of The Bible League's Latin American ministries, Colombia is experiencing a spiritual revival, fueled partly by Scriptures and training provided by their organization. A recent conference hosted by The Bible League gathered 90 participants from around Colombia in the capital of Bogota to discuss church planting. Some of the workers were already engaged in the process of planting a new church and needed additional training. Others were interested in bringing new vitality and growth to their existing churches. In what has been considered one of the most violent nations in the world, drug lords, drug-related crimes, and major drug trafficking are considered by many North Americans to be the norm. Meyer and Bible League staff in Colombia, however, believe that era is past.

SAN FRANCISCO POLICE DEPARTMENT URGED DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE TO FILE CRIMINAL CHARGES: SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. (EP) — The San Francisco Police Department has urged the district attorney's office to file criminal charges against organizers of a homosexual protest at Hamilton Square Baptist Church. The pastor of the church described the protest as a riot, and complained that the police refused to act to protect the church. According to *Christianity Today*, protests from Christians around the country are forcing the city to take action.

DESPITE DEATH THREATS AND CIVIL UNREST, GOSPEL IS SPREADING ACROSS ALGERIA: ALGIERS, Algeria (EP) — Death threats against Christians and civil unrest in the country has not stopped the spread of the gospel in Algeria, say recent eyewitness accounts. As militant Muslims attempt to install an Islamic-controlled regime similar to Iran's, civil violence grips the North African nation. More than 2,000 people have been reported killed in the fighting and terrorist attacks during the last two years, among them two Russian military officers and other foreigners. Muslim militants have threatened Christian families inside Algeria as well as Christian workers outside the country, said Baptist Press, although no killings of Christians have been reported. Threats haven't stopped many Algerians from responding to the gospel. Recent reports from inside the country confirm that house churches and home Bible study groups continue to be established in many villages. One observer told of believers who walked more than nine miles through the rain to attend Bible studies. Men and women, young and old, have responded to the message. Christian outreach continues in the capital city of Algiers, but in a more subdued way, observers say.

ARGENTINA MAY DROP REQUIREMENT THAT PRESIDENT BE ROMAN CATHOLIC: BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (BP) — For the first time, Argentine evangelicals can run for president — if recently proposed changes in Argentina's constitution are approved. Argentine President Carlos Menem and his predecessor Raul Alfonsin have signed an accord calling for reforms in Argentina's 140-year-old constitution. The proposed changes delete a requirement that the country's president and vice president be Roman Catholic, although they don't address other religious issues of concern to evangelicals. After Alfonsin signed the agreement Nov. 15, Menem agreed to postpone a national referendum on constitutional reform set for Nov. 21 if Alfonsin's Radical party would approve the agreement. Press reports said the Radical party did so Dec. 4.

May the peace of that holy Bethlehem night be with you throughout the year.

Merry Christmas from The Baptist Record Staff —



Ray Henderson
Betty Anne Bailey
Rene Kelly
Wm H. Berkner
Glenn Anderson
Jeress Dickens
Betty Smith
Shannon Simpson

Supreme Court rejects challenge to Boy Scouts' religious oath

WASHINGTON (ABP) — The nation's top court refused Dec. 6 to hear a challenge to the Boy Scouts of America's requirement that members affirm a belief in God.

Without comment, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected the appeal of an Illinois youth who argued that the requirement violates a federal anti-discrimination law.

Left standing is a federal appeals court's decision that a 1964 civil-rights law barring discrimination in public accommodations does not require the Boy Scouts to admit members who do not affirm a belief in God.

The law in question prohibits discrimination based on race, religion, or national origin in public accommodations such as hotels, restaurants, retail establishments, and places of entertainment.

Mark Welsh was prevented from joining a suburban Chicago Cub Scout pack three years ago after refusing as an agnostic to sign a pledge in which members "promise to love God."

Welsh, and his father, Elliott

Welsh, who was denied membership as an adult participant in the Cub Scout pack, filed a lawsuit contending that their exclusion from the Scouts violated the civil-rights law.

Lower courts, including the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected the Welshes' arguments, holding that Scouts are not a public accommodation covered under the civil-rights law.

While the law has been applied to some membership organizations, such as the YMCA, that are "closely connected to a facility or structure," it has not been applied to "a membership organization like the Scouts whose purpose is not closely connected to a particular facility," the circuit court said.

Even if the Scouts were deemed a public accommodation or place of entertainment, Congress specifically exempted private clubs such as the Boy Scouts from the law.

Lawyers for both parties had asked the high court to accept the case.

Richard Grossman, attorney for the Welshes, argued organizations such as the Scouts who offer entertainment at various places, rather than a fixed site, should not be exempt from the civil-rights law.

Lawyers for the Boy Scouts, whose membership policies barring girls and homosexuals have also come under attack, asked the court to decide the First Amendment right of voluntary organizations to establish membership requirements reflecting their religious and moral values.

"The right of association of Boy Scouts and other groups to limit membership to those who accept the association's moral and religious values is of little practical consequence if members must defend themselves in full-dress constitutional litigation in jurisdiction after jurisdiction simply to practice their beliefs," the Boy Scouts' petition said.

Boy Scouts are defending nine legal challenges to its membership requirements, the brief states.

Just for seniors —

Take time to enjoy the little things

Following is second in a series of articles on senior adults written by Robert J. Hastings, retired editor of the *Illinois Baptist*, news-journal of the Illinois Baptist State Association.

Grandma Sarah Gordon, born in 1850 and thus a young teen in the Civil War, was a tall, angular farm wife who wore print dresses with voluminous aprons that reached to her ankles, chewed tobacco, and pulled her long hair back into a tight bun.

Although she lived to be 93, she never drove a car, rode on an escalator, traveled on an interstate, or ate at Dairy Queen. And if she'd seen a vacation coming down the road, she wouldn't know what it was. She never lived more than 12 miles from her birthplace. Nor did she ever watch the 10 o'clock news, enjoy indoor plumbing, make a long distance call, use a zip code, or see a Disney cartoon. Nor own an electric refrigerator, which leads to my story.

She was visiting us one day when a hailstorm devastated our neighborhood. I was five years old at the time. It looked like a winter scene — ice blanketing the ground like snow, trees stripped bare of their leaves. The hail damaged our wood-shingled roof and broke some windows. During the storm, Grandma prayed aloud. But once the hail stopped, she fixed herself a glass of ice water which she enjoyed tremendously.

I well remember the scene, the wet wallpaper hanging in strips from the ceiling, water standing on the linoleum floor in our kitchen. Mom busied herself with a mop and bucket, soaking up the water. Dad grabbed a coal shovel to clear the hailstones from the back porch.

Only Grandma was calm, enjoying her iced drink. At the time, this puzzled me. Now I know the answer. To her, ice was a luxury, something you bought once or twice a summer for homemade ice cream. So she made the best of this luxurious abundance of hailstones

— she made herself a cold drink and took time to savor it.

She was relishing the moment, mindful of Psalms 118:24, "This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." As a young mother with the duties of a household, Grandma would have grabbed a mop and forgotten the ice water. As a senior adult, she knew that life must be lived as we go along.

It's no sin to do something for yourself, to enjoy some simple pleasure you skipped in your younger years. As a senior adult, you've reared your children, nourished your grandchildren, volunteered for those in need. And you're glad you did! But don't forget to make yourself a glass of ice water, while others do the mopping! P.S. And if you're out of ice cubes, try hailstones.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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UPF UT KA RVUZAF, WKA HUTKEIP IH KET LIQP-
WAPUPLA YUT UNWAVAF, UPF KET VUESAPW
YUT YKEWS UPF JNETWAVEPJ.

NQMA PEPA:WYAPWZ-PEPA

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Romans Five:Eight.

Baptist Record

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